MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING, SHALER TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2020

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:00 P.M. by the Vice Chairman William Cross. Following a prayer by Commissioner Boyle and the Pledge of Allegiance, the Vice Chairman asked the Secretary to call the roll as follows:

PRESENT: Boyle, Cross, Shutter, McElhone, Mizgorski, Fisher, Iozzo
ALSO PRESENT: Timothy Rogers, Manager; Harlan Stone, Solicitor; Judith Kording, Assistant Manager; Amanda Jennings, Finance Assistant

Mr. Rogers noted that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Commissioners Shutter and Fisher called into the meeting and was present telephonically.

The Chairman announced that an Executive Session was held on August 11, 2020 and this evening at 5:00 p.m. wherein the following topics were discussed: employee and personnel matters, contracts and policies, and an update on the actual and on-going litigation as well as potential litigations and identifiable complaints and agency business which if conducted in public would violate a lawful privilege or lead to the disclosure of confidential information. Mr. Stone said the session was absolutely necessary and was in full compliance with the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act and Act 15 which covers public meetings under the Governors Declaration of Disaster Emergency.

Approval of Minutes

The first item of business was the possible approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of the Board of Commissioners held Tuesday, August 11, 2020. Mr. Boyle moved, seconded by Mr. Mizgorski that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 11, 2020 be approved as received by each Commissioner. The motion was carried.

Planning Commission:

The next item of business was the Planning Commission minutes. Mr. Rogers asked for confirmation on the possible approval of Site Development – DRB Construction – 1120 William Flynn Highway – Seventh Ward - Lot & Block 356-N-175 be approved subject to PennDOT approval, Mr. Wagner confirmed.

Engineers Report – Mr. Matthew Sebastian

The next item of business was the Engineers Report.

- Parks and Trails
  - Received permit review comments from Allegheny County Conservation District for the Fawcett Fields and Eagle Canyon Trail project. The comments were minor issues and are being addressed. We are on track to secure permits and be ready to bid the project out in anticipation of construction in 2021.
  - Negotiated pricing for repair and maintenance activities in Fall Run Park with Gregori Construction. We have instructed them to proceed with repairs as soon as possible, with the tree damaged bridge being our top priority.
• **Sanitary and Storm Sewer**
  - Worked with O’Hara’s in-house engineer and the NHCOG to bid the 2020-2021 Sewer Rehabilitation Contract. Bids were opened at the end of August. We use the various parts of this contract frequently for sewer repair work such as root control, lining, and open cut replacement.

• **Road Paving**
  - Youngblood Paving continued their work on the annual Road Paving Program. I have been very happy with the finished product on each of the completed roads. At the current pace of paving, I expect the work to be completed during September. While this overall timeline goes beyond the initially planned August 31 end date, Youngblood has worked well within the constraints of COVID related mandated construction delays and recent rain events.
  - Reviewed road repair ordinance examples. Working with our Solicitor, I expect to have new Ordinance and Details ready for introduction at the October Board meeting. As previously mentioned, the repair details have been coordinated with Hampton Township for consistency.

**Shaler Hampton EMS**

The next item of business was a report from **Mr. Eric Schmidt**, Director of Shaler Hampton EMS (SHEMS). Mr. Schmidt reported that SHEMS busiest month so far has been August, a 59-call increase since 2019. SHEMS is already on call number 22 for the month of September and 0 calls have turned over to mutual aid. SHEMS high priority call response time has gone up, Mr. Schmidt believes this is because of the high amount of calls Shaler has received compared to other areas. Mr. Schmidt reported that they transported about 70% of patients in August, which is an increase of about 8% since last month and a 10% increase over the last few months during the COVID-19 pandemic. The SHEMS Board has given approval to order two new ambulances at their last meeting and they have received the grant they applied for in March totaling $326,000.

**New Business:**

**Possible approval of Site Development – DRB Construction – 1120 William Flynn Highway – Seventh Ward - Lot & Block 356-N-175**

The next item of business was the possible approval of Site Development – DRB Construction – 1120 William Flynn Highway – Seventh Ward - Lot & Block 356-N-175. **Buddy Swisshelm** was present at the meeting, representing Exposure Billboards. Mr. Swisshelm stated that the sign is a double-sided sign that is facing North and South on Route 8. He explained the process of getting approved through PennDOT is all done online now, and they need local municipality approval prior to PennDOT approval. Mr. Swisshelm stated they have met all of PennDOT’s rules. He stated that any emergencies, accidents, weather related events, amber alerts, etc. would interrupt the schedule and place the announcement on the message loop for as long as the emergency is in effect. Also, any Shaler related events will be permitted to advertise at no cost for 1 week. The goal is to put 10 messages on the board, 70 second messages. The sign will be on 24/7 and brightness will be turned down at night for safety purposes. A copy of the PennDOT approval will be provided to the Township once complete. Upon inquiry of **Mr.**
Rogers, Mr. Swisshelm stated that the life of a digital sign is 11.2 years but 4 to 5 years can be added if you turn the brightness down at night and change out the filters every couple of years.

Mr. Boyle moved, seconded by Mr. Mizgorski that the request to the Site Development – DRB Construction – 1120 William Flynn Highway – Seventh Ward - Lot & Block 356-N-175 be approved subject to PennDOT approval. The motion was carried.


Mr. Boyle moved, seconded by Mr. Mizgorski that the request for the Lot Subdivision/Consolidation – Joseph & Angela Suppa and Maria Caterina Suppa – 2917 Claridge Drive – Third Ward – Lot & Block 522-E-5 and Gregory & Kathleen Creighan – 2913 Claridge Drive – Third Ward – Lot & Block 522-E-7 be approved. The motion was carried.

Mr. Rogers stated that this is a very simple property swap, a neighbor giving up a piece of their property to square a piece of property.

Possible extension for Police Officer applicants of time period to obtain Act 120 training whether instate or out of state to January 1, 2021.

The next item of business was the possible extension for Police Officer applicants of time period to obtain Act 120 training whether instate or out of state to January 1, 2021. Mr. Rogers stated that Shaler Township is going through the application process and there is 25 applicants and something that came up is the out of state applicants and applicants that are currently in the Police Academy. Mr. Rogers recommends that this time period is extended to obtain Act 120 training so the cadets in the current academy and out of state applicants can still apply while finishing up with schooling.

Mr. Iozzo moved, seconded by Mr. Mizgorski that the extension for Police Officer applicants of time period to obtain Act 120 training whether instate or out of state to January 1, 2021 be approved. The motion was carried.

Receipts and Authorizations

The next item of business was the receipts for the month of August 2020. Mr. Boyle moved, seconded by Mr. Mizgorski that the receipts for the month of August 2020 be turned over to the proper authorities for deposit. The motion was carried.

The next item of business was the authorizations for the month of August 2020. Mr. Boyle moved, seconded by Mr. Iozzo that warrants be drawn for the month of August 2020. The motion was carried.
Update from the Chief of Police on the investigation of the incident that occurred on July 25, 2020 in front of the school on Mount Royal Boulevard

Chief Frank stated that Officers met and identified the suspect that was reported in the news media, he admitted to what he did, and he was remorseful. They filled out a report and contacted the Allegheny County District Attorney. Shaler Township does not have cases with hate speech that they investigate on a regular basis so that is why they reached out to the District Attorney. The District Attorney reviewed it and stated they do not support any charges for hate speech. The Shaler Township Police then took a step further and contacted both the Attorney General of Pennsylvania and the US Attorney’s Office of Western Pennsylvania and it was the same result, without someone coming forward as a victim, they did not support any charges. That concluded the investigation at this point. Upon inquiry from Mr. Shutter, Chief Frank stated that this individual was not a resident of Shaler Township and since there are no charges, they will not be identifying the person. Chief Frank stated that they had an Officer attend a training over a year ago called “Implicit Biased Training”, which talks about racial and social issues. 6 other Officers have gone through this training within the last 6 weeks and they plan to get all Officers in moving forward, it is around 4 to 5 hours of training. Chief Frank stated they had a joint effort with Etna and Millvale Police to put this program together, and due to the limitations inside, they are only allowed about 25 people, so they are going forward with different sessions of the training, this will take about 3 to 4 months to complete for all Officers due to the COVID-19 restrictions. The Officers that have already completed this training stated it was a very informative and well put together training that opened their eyes to a lot. This training is an addition onto previous yearly trainings the Officers have already been completing.

Commissioners Comments

Mr. Cross stated on behalf of the Board of Commissioners:
“The Township of Shaler welcomes everyone to our community, regardless of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, age, national origin, ancestry, handicap, or disability. We will not tolerate any hateful actions to others by those employed by, or conducting business on behalf of, the Township. While we cannot control what is in the hearts and minds of those that live in or visit our community, it is our hope and prayer that all people show inclusion and respect, not division and hate.”

Manager’s Report

Mr. Rogers stated that Bob Furar is taking an early retirement after 17 years of service with the Public Works Department, he is moving to Naples, Florida. Mr. Rogers and the Board wish him the best of luck. Mr. Rogers stated that on September 22, 2020 the Committee Meetings will begin again.

Mrs. Kording stated that the second Community Yard Sale will be this Saturday, September 12th from 8 AM to 2 PM at Kiwanis Park.

The Board of Commissioners extended their thank you from residents and themselves for all the work that has been put into the pool this summer during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Public Comments
Dorothy Petrancosta at 148 Skylark Drive

Ms. Petrancosta rose to speak an objection to how a Planning Commission meeting was handled.

There being no further business, Mr. Boyle moved, seconded by Mr. Mizgorski that the meeting be adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Timothy J. Rogers, Secretary
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